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Polish Labour Migration to the UK: Data Discrepancies, Migrant Distributions and Entrepreneurial Activity

Abstract

This paper contributes to a growing body of work on labour market migration to the UK from the New Member States of the EU, particularly the migration of Polish nationals to the UK, drawing attention to the weaknesses of existing datasets which attempt to quantify these migration flows and in particular to map the geographical distribution of migrants. The analysis of Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and National Insurance Number Allocation (NINo) data, demonstrate that NMS migration has focused on urban and rural locales rather than having a predominantly rural or 'peripheral' area bias. The paper also argues that the discrepancies between WRS and NINo data potentially reveal a 'hidden' geography of self-employment and entrepreneurial activity amongst NMS migrants which merits further investigation.

Key words: West Midlands, South East, NINo registrations, New Member States (NMS), spatial distribution, Polish migrants, entrepreneurship, self-employment.

Polish Labour Migration to the UK: Data Discrepancies and Migrant Distributions.

Introduction

There is a growing body of research into international, and particularly EU, migration, which has focused on either research on macro-level flows and impacts at the national and international scales, such as the economy of the receiving country (Blanchflower *et al.* 2007), and migrant employment opportunities (Anderson *et al.* 2006; Drinkwater *et al.* 2007), or to studies of individual migrant communities at the local level, such as literature focusing on large cities (GAWC 2009), migration hotspots (Leapman 2007) or on the place of migrant labour in London's economy (e.g. Evans *et al*. 2005; May *et al*. 2007; Wills *et al*. 2009). The two are of course interconnected, with the macro level data commonly informing the selection of local case studies, and local case studies explaining wider migration trends (Stenning and Dawley 2009; Harris *et al*. 2011).

The enlargement of the European Union and the accession of ten new member states (NMS) in 2004 (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia) and 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) led to new migration flows across Europe. Understanding these flows is complicated by imperfect datasets making it difficult to identify and explore trends and to select

places for in depth research. This paper argues that the selection of locations for future case studies of NMS migrant labour needs to be informed by a better understanding of the geography of immigration at the national, regional and local level, which is itself reliant on a better understanding of the imperfect datasets available and discrepancies between them. This is important for two reasons; first because to appropriately interpret the data provided by these datasets is critical in the selection of locales for in depth research, and second because the process of exploring the discrepancies between different datasets can in itself generate research questions for further enquiry.

This article explores Polish migration to the UK by examining two datasets: the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and National Insurance Number Allocations (NINo) in relation to NMS. The analysis calls into question the emphasis that has been placed on NMS migration as predominantly focussed on rural or 'peripheral' areas of the UK, and suggests that an exploration of the differences between the migrant distribution data generated by the WRS and NINo generates some potentially fruitful avenues for future research. An important point is that the differences between these datasets suggest that a significant proportion of Polish migrants were entrepreneurs who established their own businesses rather than employees.

The enlargement of the EU in 2004 has had a profound impact on migration patterns and the movement of accession migrants to the United Kingdom. Since the initial arrival of EU labour migrants including those from Poland, who account for 60-70%

of all registered UK migrant workers, researchers have tried to track these migration flows (Anderson *et al.* 2006; Scott 2006; Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; Burrell 2008; Currie 2008), in parallel with media attention, which initially concentrated on the perceived negative impacts of immigration on welfare benefits and labour markets, but which by 2008 had shifted emphasis to suggest that Polish migrants were leaving the UK in the wake of the financial crisis. Nevertheless, a significant Polish immigrant population remains in the UK, and we argue that their participation in local labour markets, and their impact on local and regional development, merit greater academic and policy attention, not least because early evidence has shown that Accession 8 (A8)[1] migrants, in particular those from Poland, have a more diverse geography of employment and residence than do previous waves of migrants (Stenning *et al*. 2006).

Further in-depth place-based research on NMS migration to the UK is required guided by an analysis that informs the identification of specific locations. In this paper, we argue that this selection process could be usefully informed by the analysis of the database of annual National Insurance Number (NINo) allocations to adult overseas (non-UK) nationals entering the UK. This database provides a particularly useful set of data pertaining specifically to the intended economic activity of migrants, since it directly reflects their intention to work in the UK. The paper also highlights that the database can be used to identify self-employment as a potentially important missing driver behind EU accession migration. We have previously outlined the utility of this data source (self reference), and we briefly

[1] The A8 countries are Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

summarise this discussion here before comparing the WRS and NINo datasets, as they pertain to NMS and Polish migrants, at the national, regional and local level. The analysis highlights differences between these dataset and explores some possible reasons for these discrepancies, and identifying directions for future research. This article explores these datasets to show that the geography of NMS migration to the UK is complex and includes a focus on both urban and rural location and labour market participation that includes employment as well as self-employment.

The paper is organised as follows. First we summarise the respective strengths and weaknesses of data sources which have thus far informed the study of NMS and Polish labour migration, and examine the differences between two of these in terms of the trends that can be identified. Next previous studies of labour migration from the NMS are explored since 2002.A sub-national analysis of the geography of Polish immigrants is undertaken based on two Government Office Regions (GOR)[2] (the South East and the West Midlands). In so doing, a complex geography of NMS migration is developed that draws attention to places which seem to be significant as destinations for Polish migrants seeking to work in the UK, but which have so far been overlooked in local and regional studies of their labour market participation and impact on local and regional economic development. Self-employment or entrepreneurship is identified as an important element in Polish immigration to the UK. The conclusion identifies future avenues for research.

[2] The government office region (GOR) is currently the largest administrative level in England.

Polish Immigration to the UK: Datasets and Discrepancies

Previous studies of Polish labour migration to the UK have relied to a greater or lesser extent on national level data pertaining to accession migration and the destinations of migrants in the UK. Our contention is that the weaknesses of the data sources most commonly used, in terms of their frequency of collection or publication, their sample survey nature or their geographical scale of data collection, may have portrayed an unbalanced or misleading picture of immigrant distribution, which may have led to potentially interesting sites of study being overlooked.

The enlargement of the European Union (EU) to the East in 2004 and 2007 fuelled debates over immigration, and the demand for better statistics, particularly since the United Kingdom was one of only three countries (along with Ireland and Sweden) to allow migrants from the NMS to enter its labour markets more or less without restriction. There is a general recognition that official statistics on migration are inadequate, particularly at the local level (LGA Research 2007) with no single, all-inclusive system to measure the movement of people into and out of the UK as a whole, and only infrequent measurement of the actual location of migrants once they have settled in the UK. Existing data sources include the UK Census, the Labour Force Survey, the International Passenger Survey, and the Worker Registration Scheme (Boden and Rees 2010). Each is explored in detail in a previous paper (self reference), and we briefly summarise that discussion here, along with a summary of the comparative strengths of the NINo dataset.

The *UK Census* ought to be the most reliable data source for detailed information on the characteristics of immigrants to the UK, requiring, as it does, every UK resident to feature on a census return. An unknown proportion of residents remain uncounted. The census has particular weaknesses for immigration research; it provides a static snapshot of the UK's population every ten years which misses the accession migration which took place largely between census dates.

All EU member states are required to conduct a *Labour Force Survey* (LFS). In the UK this is a quarterly sample of households, whose purpose "is to provide information on the UK labour market that can then be used to develop, manage, evaluate and report on labour market policies" (ONS 2008). Although used effectively to examine the labour characteristics of recent immigrants (e.g. Drinkwater *et al.* 2006; Sumption 2009), as a sample survey, the LFS cannot make absolute statements about either the size or the distribution of immigrant populations.

Data for migrants entering and leaving the UK are largely based on the *International Passenger Survey (IPS)*, a random sample survey based on c250,000 face-to-face interviews with passengers at airports, seaports and the Channel Tunnel. As the main source for migration studies for over 30 years, the IPS' problems, based on small sample sizes, are well known. Extrapolations from IPS estimate the number and characteristics of migrants intending to stay for a year or longer, and although these insights are valuable, they should be treated with caution in relation to the labour migration of Accession migrants, since the IPS also covers non-working migrants, such as non-working students, family members, and asylum seekers.

Data from the *Worker Registration Scheme* are widely used, and should in theory capture most economic activity undertaken by migrants. The scheme requires migrants to register within one month of starting a new job, and to re-register if they change employer. Each WRS application represents one job, not one applicant, and applicants are only represented once in the data. After 12 months' uninterrupted work migrants acquire full Worker Treaty rights and are free from the requirement to register (Home Office *et al.* 2008). It is estimated that relatively high proportions of migrants, between around a quarter and a third, do not register on the scheme (Drinkwater 2008; Fife Research Coordination Group 2008; Surrey 2006) and the self-employed are not required to register. Pollard *et al*.'s (2008: 18) survey of A8 migrants suggested that more than 40% of Poles who worked in the UK since 2004 had never registered on the WRS.

By comparison, the *National Insurance Number (NINo)* dataset for NINo allocations to adult overseas (non-UK) nationals entering the UK, collected by the UK Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (DWP 2007: 2008) has been described as the most reliable information source on the number of labour migrants entering the UK (Drinkwater 2008; self-reference). NINo registrations give an indication of the number of *working* migrants in the UK, since having a NINo indicates that an individual is highly likely to be employed, or seeking employment (Boden and Rees 2010; DWP 2007). The NINo indicates an individual's entitlement to social security

benefits including the state pension[3]. This dataset is valuable as a proxy measure of immigration, in that it provides an indication of migrants' geographical distribution[4]. While the dataset can only be used to identify the geography of new migrants rather than step or return migration, and cannot reflect emigration, nor show length of stay in the UK, or movement within the UK, its significant strengths are that data is provided by country of origin, is disaggregated by Government Office Region (GOR), Local Authority (LA) and Parliamentary Constituency (PC) and is published annually.

The WRS is the dataset most frequently used by researchers investigating the spatial distribution of NMS migrants in the UK (Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; Coombes *et al.* 2007; Stenning and Dawley 2009). Although its drawbacks are acknowledged, it continues to be the main source of data and its indications of migrant distributions are seriously regarded. The NINo dataset provides a useful comparator for WRS, since although the measures are different they essentially measure the same thing and should, in theory at least, capture a similar set of processes; differences between these measures highlight trends and related geographies that need to be explored and explained. Migrant workers must register with WRS when they first take a job in the UK, and one might assume that at the same time, they would register for the NINo to work legally in the UK. These two processes are not formally connected, but could be reasonably assumed to be part of the same process of becoming a legal worker in the UK, entitled to state benefits and a state pension

[3] For a detailed discussion of the process of NINo application and the precise nature of data collection and analysis, see Harris et al (forthcoming).

[4] A similar migration dataset is the UK National Health Service's 'Flag 4' data, which records registrations with General Practitioners (local doctors) from individuals previously resident outside the UK. However, unlike the NINo, Flag 4 and the GP patient register is a 'snapshot' taken annually, rather than a comprehensive record of each registration, and of course GP registration is unconnected to the working status of migrants.

based on NI contributions. With some exceptions, most notably the self-employed, (who do not have to register for WRS) the WRS and NINo should therefore broadly capture the same migrant worker populations, although the actual registrations for each scheme may take place in different places, depending on place of residence, place of work, and the movement between these at the time of registration for both NINo and WRS. However, this is not what we find when we compare the two datasets.

Comparing the absolute numbers of NINo registrations made to Polish nationals, with WRS applications from the same group for the period May 2004-June 2011 reveals that the NINo dataset has captured far more migration activity than the Worker Registration Scheme. During this period over 965,000 allocations of a NINo were made to Polish nationals, compared to just 677,120 Polish registrations with the WRS (Table I), a difference of over 228,000, or almost 43%. Almost half of this WRS 'undercount' comes from the GOR region of London, where the difference between NINo and WRS data was greatest, at just over 128,000 incidences (NINo counted 224,000 allocations, WRS 95,880 registrations), suggesting that WRS might have captured less than half of the Polish labour migrants in London. The magnitude of difference between NINo and WRS varies between other GORs, with the smallest differences in the East Midlands and the East of England, but on average the WRS 'undercount' is still high, at 48.0%. We stress here that we do not consider this 'undercount' to be precisely that, for the reasons discussed above – this is simply a convenient shorthand.

Table I: NINo and WRS applications to Polish nationals entering the UK by Government Office Region 2004/05- 2010/2011

Government Office Region	NINO registrations to Polish nationals (000)	WRS applications by Polish nationals (000)	Difference between NINo and WRS (000)	% difference between NINo and WRS
London	224.00	95.88	128.12	133.6
East Midlands	76.20	69.04	7.16	10.4
East of England	88.18	78.80	9.38	11.9
West Midlands	76.72	59.83	16.90	28.2
South East	114.81	87.42	27.40	31.3
South West	68.34	56.24	12.11	21.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	67.22	56.42	10.81	19.2
North West	81.93	60.74	21.20	34.9
Wales	28.64	19.95	8.70	43.6
North East	22.50	8.74	13.76	157.4
Scotland	85.21	62.60	22.61	36.1
Northern Ireland	31.65	21.49	10.17	47.3
				Average= 48.0
Total	965.40	677.12	288.28	42.6

Source: NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. WRS applications are author's own calculations from WRS data obtained by contact with the UK Border Agency

There are at least four possible explanations for the difference between these datasets, both of which should in theory represent comprehensive, 'absolute', rather than sample survey data. These explanations could operate in isolation or in

combination in any given region, but in each case they raise questions both about the activities of migrants and their interface with formal registration schemes.

First, existing studies have identified an apparent 'rural bias' in flow of Polish migrants to the UK, but this analysis is based on the Worker Registration Scheme (Stenning and Dawley 2009). If the evidence from the city of London is extrapolated to other large cities, then this might indicate a widespread undercounting of Polish migrant workers in urban areas. If this is the case, then it calls into question some conclusions already drawn about the geographical distribution of Polish workers which, based on WRS data, show disproportionately high levels of migrants in rural areas (Stenning and Dawley 2009).

Second, and connectedly, is the importance of London as a migrant destination, which could be being significantly underestimated in research informed by the relatively low levels of Polish migrant workers recorded in the capital by the WRS. If this is the case, then rather than constituting a significantly different migrant distribution, as suggested by Stenning and Dawley (2009), Polish migrants to the UK as part of the NMS immigration stream could in fact be mirroring far more closely the geographical distributions of previous waves of immigrants to the UK.

Thirdly, and alternatively, it could be the case that rather than WRS applications being artificially low in London, NINo registrations are artificially high. This might be because Polish migrants could be arriving first into London, registering for a NI number there, and then dispersing to other regions of the UK, where they might

later register for the WRS. In the absence of research which traces the geographical trajectories of Polish migrants within the UK, and the timing of their engagement with official schemes such as NINo and WRS, we cannot speculate about the accuracy of this explanation, but it undoubtedly requires further research.

Finally, the discrepancy between WRS and NINo could be explained by something other than either a rural WRS bias or a quirk of migrant movement into and through London and possibly other urban centres. A significant difference between the operation of the WRS and NINo dataset is in the type of workers that they reflect. WRS only targets employees, those taking existing jobs in the UK, who must register when they obtain a job, and if they change job within 12 months of arrival in the UK. The self-employed, however, are not required to apply for registration through WRS. By contrast, the NINo dataset should include *all* those working legally in the UK, whether employed or self-employed. In order to qualify for UK social welfare benefits and the state pension, both the employed and the self-employed must register for a National Insurance number. An unspecified but potentially significant proportion of the discrepancy between WRS and NINo is caused by the numbers of Poles who are self-employed, acting entrepreneurially to establish businesses in the UK, and who are therefore excluded from the Worker Registration Scheme.

Regional and Local Geographies of Polish Migration to the UK

Putting the absolute differences between WRS and NINo and the possible reasons for them to one side, there are also comparisons to be drawn between the relative levels of data recorded by both schemes at the regional and local levels. In this

section some recent studies are explored, largely based on WRS data, which seek to identify the location of A8 labour migrants, and compare their findings both with each other and with an analysis based on the NINo.

Using the Worker Registration Scheme at the national level, Bauere et al (2007) mapped the numbers of A8 nationals (including Poles) registering for a WRS per thousand of the total population for each Local Authority in the UK. Their results showed that the A8 population had spread widely across the UK, with the highest ratios of A8 to 'background' population in Northern Ireland, Eastern England, and North Norfolk, and in scattered local concentrations in the Midlands, South West and South East. By contrast, they found low ratios in Wales, and in the North East and North West (Bauere *et al.* 2007: 8). The local authority with the highest ratio was the City of London, with the City of Westminster (central London) third. The East Midlands authorities of Boston, Northampton, and South Holland were second, fourth and fifth, and the East of England authorities of Peterborough, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire also ranked highly (Bauere *et al.* 2007: 8).

Also using WRS data, Green *et al*. (2007a&b) focussed their analysis on the East and West Midlands in their study of the impacts of recent waves of NMS migration on labour markets. Using the UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) urban/rural classification scheme to ascertain the types of settlement to which migrants had located (Green et al. 2007b), they found that the most significant levels of accession migration were in rural areas with concentrations of food growing, processing and packaging industries; a summer peak in WRS

applications suggesting that seasonal work was being undertaken by NMS migrants in these areas. This finding is supported by other research which argues that a key feature of the A8 migration to the UK appears to be a greater orientation towards rural areas than in previous migrations (Stenning *et al.* 2006, CRC 2007, Chappell *et al.* 2009, Trade Union Congress 2004).

Using WRS alongside 2001 Census data, Stenning and Dawley's (2009, 279) research supports the thesis that it is not only core cities which are attracting A8 migrants: "they are living and working in everyday, small-town, peripheral Britain". They argue that the geography of recent migrants is "quite different to that of the early years" (ibid 275), suggesting that these recent migrants are targeting 'peripheral' regions of the UK, such as the North East and East of England. They use WRS and Census data to calculate Location Quotients (LQs) for each UK local authority, to indicate the under- or over- representation of A8 migrant groups. All five of their highest LQs are in the Fens region of Eastern England, and two Government Office Regions – East of England and East Midlands – dominate the results. Other rural authorities in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the South West are also strongly represented, showing that they are home to disproportionate numbers of A8 populations (Stenning and Dawley 2009: 277). In this study the authors define neither "peripheral Britain" nor the meaning of 'peripherality' for the migrants themselves, leaving these terms open to an interpretation that might reasonably include an element of rurality rather than location in major urban centres.

In summary, these studies which predominantly use WRS data identify a similar set of regions in the UK to which A8 immigrants appear to have been attracted. London, the East of England, the East Midlands, and Northern Ireland are highlighted by these studies, and Stenning and Dawley (2009) additionally identify Scotland and the South West of England. Both Green et al (2007a&b) and Stenning and Dawley (2009) draw particular attention to the more rural areas as destinations for A8 migrants.

Comparing studies using the WRS dataset with an analysis of the NINo dataset as it pertains to Poles shows some interesting similarities. At the national level, during the period 2002-09 there were high absolute numbers of Polish registrations right across the UK (Table II), with the majority in London, the South East, Scotland, the East of England and the North West GORs (Figure 1). Considering Polish registrations as a proportion of the working population of each GOR, however, while London remains dominant, the NINo results echo the findings of Bauere (2007) and Stenning and Dawley (2009), in also identifying Northern Ireland, the East Midlands, Scotland and the West Midlands as regions with high relative levels of migrants. However, whereas Stenning and Dawley (2009) described this distribution as migrants living in 'peripheral' regions, in terms of their location in predominantly rural local authorities within these GORs, the NINo data indicates a slightly different pattern.

Table II: NINo registrations to Polish nationals entering the UK by Government Office Region 2002/2003- 2010/2011

Government Office Region	NINO registrations to Polish nationals (000)	Total regional employment (000)	Poles as a Percentage of the working population	Standard deviation	Rank
London	231.97	3850.33	6.02	2.48	1
Northern Ireland	31.71	803.11	3.95	0.6892	2
Scotland	92.52	2506.14	3.69	0.46427	3
East Midlands	76.41	2152.60	3.55	0.34316	4
West Midlands	77.01	2412.48	3.19	0.03172	5
East of England	88.61	2845.77	3.11	-0.03749	6
Yorkshire and the Humber	67.37	2398.87	2.81	-0.29702	7
South East	115.84	4198.33	2.76	-0.34027	8
South West	68.64	2494.07	2.75	-0.34893	9
North West	82.19	3121.09	2.63	-0.45274	10
Wales	28.70	1338.22	2.14	-0.87664	11
North East	14.23	1144.17	1.24	-1.65524	12
Total	743.23	25414.85			

Source: NINo Time Series- Financial Year of Registration Date= 2002/2003- 2010/2011. In employment Times Series- April 2011- June 2011. NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. In employment figures are from ONS, 2011

FIGURE 1 HERE

The NiNo dataset can be analysed to identify local and regional geographies of NMS migrations and also localised 'hotspots' of Polish NINo registrations. Choosing for closer analysis two regions which fall in the middle of the NINo ranking table by both absolute and relative number of NINo registrations to Poles, the South East and the

West Midlands, and which each include a variety of 'types' of places in terms of the level of urban and rural population as defined by DEFRA, we can identify specific areas in which high levels of registrations have occurred.

The South East

The South East Government Office Region of the UK stretches from Kent in the east, the Isle of Wight in the south, West Berkshire in the west and Milton Keynes in the north, and contains cities and large towns, small towns and also rural areas (Table III). In the South East GOR the highest NINo registrations for Poles as a proportion of the working population were in local authorities classified as 'urban' areas, specifically in the large conurbations of Slough, Southampton, Reading, Arun and Oxford (Table IV). In Slough, Polish allocations comprised almost 18% of those for the total working population. This significant presence of Polish labour migrants in 'urban' areas is reinforced by location quotients (LQs) for each of the local authorities considered, indicating the over-representation of Polish migrants in each local authority (using the number of people employed at workplaces in each local authority (NOMIS 2011) as the comparator statistic. According to the LQs, Polish labour migrants are very strongly represented in Slough, and strongly represented in Southampton and Reading- all being urban areas[5]. Nevertheless, this is not a straightforward urban distribution of registrations: the lowest proportions of Polish NINo registrations is also in urban areas, specifically Havant (between Portsmouth

[5] Location quotients are a useful technique for identifying a concentration in a region or area. Here location quotients compare the share of local employment of Polish migrants to the share of national employment of Polish migrants. A location quotient of 1 indicates the local share of employment of Polish migrants is equal to the national share. A location quotient of less than 1 indicates that the local area has less Polish migrants that the national share, and a value greater than 1 indicates that the local area has a higher concentration of Polish migrants relative to the nation. Location quotients of over 1.5 indicate strong localisation.

and Chichester) and Adur (in West Sussex). Similarly, scattered both towards the top and the bottom of the list of local authorities are 'rural' areas such as Chichester towards the top, and Wealden towards the bottom. In short, the NINo analysis reveals that there is not a pronounced 'rural' distribution of Polish migrants in the South East.

Given the possible significance of London for Polish migrants and in the light of its proximity to the South East GOR, it might be anticipated that the distance from London would be a key factor in the distribution of Polish registrations in the South East, with those authorities closer to London having a higher proportion of registrations than those further away. This is not the case as the average distance from London for the top ten and bottom ten Local Authorities is similar (Table IV). Thus proximity to London does not appear to be an important driver in influencing the locational decisions of Polish migrants (Evans *et al*. 2005; May *et al*. 2007; Wills *et al*. 2009).

Table III: The DEFRA urban/rural categorisation

Classification	Definition
Major Urban (MU)	Districts with either 100,000 people or 50% of their population in urban areas with a population of more than 750,000.
Large Urban (LU)	Districts with either 50,000 people or 50 percent of their population in one of 17 urban areas with a population between 250,000 and 750,000.
Other Urban (OU)	Districts with fewer than 37,000 people or less than 26% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.
Significant Rural (SU)	Districts with more than 37,000 people or more than 26% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.
Rural-50 (R50)	Districts with at least 50% but less than 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.
Rural-80 (R80)	Districts with at least 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.

Source: DEFRA 2009a

Table IV: NINo registrations to Polish nationals in the local authorities of the South East region of the UK 2002/2003- 2010/2011

Local authority	NINo registrations to Polish nationals (000)	Total local authority employment (000)	Poles as a percentage of the working population	Standard deviation	Rank	Location Quotients (LQ)	DEFRA classification	Distance from London (miles)
Top ten local authorities								
Slough	10.83	61.1	17.73	2.47316	1	5.2092	Other Urban	22.4
Southampton	12.17	115.7	10.52	0.81857	2	3.0913	Large Urban	80.5
Reading	5.99	79.7	7.52	0.13012	3	2.2088	Large Urban	41.7
Arun	4.45	65.5	6.79	-0.03741	4	1.9967	Large Urban	65.2
Oxford	4.6	76.2	6.04	-0.20952	5	1.7741	Other Urban	59.4
Tunbridge Wells	2.66	51	5.22	-0.3977	6	1.5328	Significant Rural	39.4
Cherwell	3.17	70.8	4.48	-0.56752	7	1.3159	Significant Rural	80.9
Crawley	2.39	54.2	4.41	-0.58358	8	1.2959	Other Urban	30.7
Chichester	2.1	56.9	3.69	-0.74881	9	1.0847	80+% Rural	65
Eastbourne	1.46	46.7	3.13	-0.87732	10	0.9188	Other Urban	72.6
Bottom ten local authorities								
Worthing	0.51	49.1	1.04	1.34559	59	0.3053	Large Urban	61
Gosport	0.37	36.4	1.02	1.23252	60	0.2987	Large Urban	97.3
Mid Sussex	0.65	67	0.97	0.94983	61	0.2851	80+% Rural	38.5
Horsham	0.56	64.2	0.87	0.38445	62	0.2564	50-80% Rural	40.1
Tandridge	0.34	42.6	0.8	-0.01131	63.5	0.2346	50-80% Rural	21.5
Rother	0.29	36.4	0.8	-0.01131	63.5	0.2341	50-80% Rural	58.1
Wealden	0.46	63.3	0.73	-0.40707	65	0.2136	80+% Rural	53.1
Fareham	0.39	57.4	0.68	-0.68976	66	0.1997	Large Urban	92.3

Adur	0.17	29	0.59	-1.19859	67	0.1723	Large Urban	57.3
Havant	0.29	55.5	0.52	-1.59435	68	0.1536	Large Urban	69.6

Source: NINo Time Series- Financial Year of Registration Date= 2002/2003- 2010/2011. In employment Times Series- Jan10-Dec 10. NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. In employment figures are from NOMIS 2011. Classification figures are from DEFRA 2009b.

The West Midlands

The same variable picture emerges in the West Midlands. Like the South East, the region is geographically diverse, with two major conurbations (Birmingham and the Black Country and Stoke-on-Trent), cathedral cities and market towns and rural areas in the western counties of Shropshire and Herefordshire which border Wales. The region includes Britain's second city, Birmingham, part of the West Midlands conurbation. As is the case in the South East GOR, in the West Midlands, both urban and rural areas occupy positions throughout the ranking of local authorities by Polish NINo registrations as a proportion of the workforce (Table V). In this GOR, the list is headed by the rural area of Herefordshire, where Polish allocations comprise almost 9% of those for the entire working population, which is a significant representation according to the LQs. Herefordshire is closely followed by the town of Rugby with Polish allocation comprising 6.58% of the entire working population. At the bottom of the list are the major 'urban' area of Dudley, very close to the city of Birmingham, and the more rural areas of Cannock, Bromsgrove and Southern Staffordshire.

Table V: NINo registrations to Polish nationals in the local authorities of the West Midlands region of the UK 2002/2003- 2010/2011

Local authority	NINO registrations to Polish nationals (000)	Total local authority employment (000)	Poles as a percentage of the working population	Standard deviation	Rank	Location Quotients (LQ)	DEFRA classification
Herefordshire, County of	7.05	82.20	8.58	2.49567	1	2.5206	50-80% Rural
Rugby	2.75	41.80	6.58	1.59789	2	1.9335	Significant Rural
Coventry	9.17	139.90	6.55	1.58443	3	1.9263	Large Urban
Sandwell	6.82	111.60	6.11	1.38692	4	1.7960	Major Urban
Redditch	2.32	39.50	5.87	1.27918	5	1.7261	Other Urban
Wychavon	3.01	58.70	5.13	0.94701	6	1.5070	80+% Rural
East Staffordshire	2.65	53.50	4.95	0.86621	7	1.4557	Significant Rural
Stratford on Avon	2.77	57.70	4.80	0.79887	8	1.4109	80+% Rural
Worcester	2.15	47.10	4.56	0.69114	9	1.3415	Other Urban
Telford and Wrekin	2.81	74.00	3.80	0.34998	10	1.1160	Other Urban
Birmingham	15.33	407.00	3.77	0.33652	11	1.1070	Major Urban
Wolverhampton	3.43	91.90	3.73	0.31856	12	1.0969	Major Urban
Tamworth	0.88	31.00	2.84	-0.08095	13	0.8343	Other Urban
Stafford	1.47	57.90	2.54	-0.21562	14	0.7461	Significant Rural
Stoke on Trent	2.37	101.90	2.33	-0.30988	15	0.6835	Large Urban
Warwick	1.51	69.90	2.16	-0.38619	16	0.6349	Significant Rural
Nuneaton and Bedworth	1.10	54.50	2.02	-0.44904	17	0.5932	Other Urban
Malvern Hills	0.66	33.50	1.97	-0.47148	18	0.5790	50-80% Rural
Walsall	1.83	100.90	1.81	-0.54331	19	0.5330	Major Urban
Wyre Forest	0.79	45.60	1.73	-0.57922	20	0.5091	Significant Rural
Lichfield	0.78	47.30	1.65	-0.61513	21	0.4846	50-80% Rural
North Warwickshire	0.44	29.30	1.50	-0.68246	22	0.4413	50-80% Rural
Shropshire	2.04	138.40	1.47	-0.69593	23	0.4332	50-80% Rural
Newcastle Under Lyme	0.57	55.70	1.02	-0.89793	24	0.3007	Large Urban
Solihull	0.61	88.50	0.69	-1.04606	25	0.2026	Major Urban

Staffordshire Moorlands	0.31	47.70	0.65	-1.06402	26	0.1910	50-80% Rural
Dudley	0.82	134.80	0.61	-1.08197	27	0.1788	Major Urban
Cannock Chase	0.24	49.50	0.48	-1.14033	28	0.1425	Significant Rural
Bromsgrove	0.16	43.90	0.36	-1.19419	29	0.1071	Significant Rural
South Staffordshire	0.17	47.90	0.35	-1.19868	30	0.1043	Significant Rural

Source: NINo Time Series- Financial Year of Registration Date= 2002/2003- 2010/2011. In employment Times Series- Jan 2010- Dec 2010. NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. In employment figures are from NOMIS 2011. Classification figures are from DEFRA 2009b.

In neither the South East nor the West Midlands is there a significant weighting of Polish migrants towards either 'urban' or 'rural' areas. Instead, a patchwork or mosaic exists of both high and low levels of registrations in proportion to the workforce as a whole across the entire range of classifications of local authority, from the most urban to the most rural in terms of population distribution. In both regions, there are locations with very significant concentrations of Polish workers, as measured by the proportion of all NINo allocations being made to Poles, such as Slough, Southampton and Rugby. Since these locally high levels appear against an average level for the respective GORs which is relatively low at the national scale (see Table II) such locally anomalous places might be argued to merit further investigation. It is worth noting that these places have been completely overlooked by earlier studies[6].

The identification of Slough, Southampton and Rugby as 'hotspots' of Polish immigration raises some interesting questions regarding the emerging geography of

[6] Studies into Polish migrant workers in the UK at the local focus on London (Garapich 2006), Newcastle (Stenning and Dawley 2009), and Scotland (Helinska-Hughes *et al.* 2009) with some work on the West Midlands region (Meardi 2007) but not at the local authority level.

Polish migration, but the analysis of the NINo dataset also raises another set of interesting issues that require further detailed investigation. First, by conducting the same process demonstrated here for these two mid-ranking GORs, researchers could, for example, identify disproportionately high or unusually low levels of NMS migrants from any of the A8 states in any of the GORs, either GORs with high or low 'background' levels of NINo allocations to NMS nationals, or select a range of levels of NINo allocations across a variety of 'types' of place according to the DEFRA classification of urban/rural places. Secondly, the analysis highlights the difference between the NINo and the WRS datasets which may be explained by the self-employed Polish migrants that are captured by the NINo but not the WRS.

Explorations and Entrepreneurialism

The analysis of the distribution of NINo registrations to Poles differs from the distributions of A8 migrants which might be anticipated based on the findings of previous studies using WRS data, it is worth exploring what these differences are and why they might have occurred. Based on WRS data, Stenning and Dawley (2009) suggested that A8 migrants to the UK have been attracted to and have settled in 'peripheral' areas, which correspond broadly to rural areas. In the West Midlands Green et al (2007a&b) suggested a similar rural distribution of A8 migrant workers. Albeit focussing on different regions of the UK, but with the overlap of the West Midlands, the NINo data does not bear this distribution out. The differences could be due to the 'rural bias' of the WRS which seems to undercount migrant workers in urban areas. This could explain why we see more urban areas towards the tops of

NINo tables of Polish NINo registrations in these two regions than the arguments advanced by Green et al and Stenning and Dawley (2009) might anticipate.

An alternative explanation might be found in the intrinsic difference between the two datasets; the difference may be explained by the additional group of self-employed Polish migrants that are captured by the NINo but not the WRS. It could be that in these two GORs, the unexpectedly high levels of Polish NINo registrations are attributable, in part, to a WRS rural bias, but also that they might reflect a significant occurrence of Polish self-employment in urban areas. We do not suggest here that self-employment amongst Poles is so widespread as to account for the whole of the discrepancy between WRS and NINo, but we do contend that there is sufficient indication here of its magnitude; entrepreneurialism amongst Poles and potentially other A8 migrants should be afforded more academic and policy attention.

The literature on immigrant entrepreneurship suggests that entrepreneurial activity tends to be located in urban, rather than rural areas (Light 1972; Borjas 1986; Aldrich *et al*. 1990; Rath 2000; Masurel *et al.* 2002; Wang 2010; Lashner Dayanim 2011), in part to service the usually urban immigrant population distribution, but also because urban areas provide the highest levels of passing trade, regardless of its nationality or ethnicity, and therefore yield the greatest likelihood of achieving 'break-out' for the business from catering purely to this limited co-ethnic market .

Entrepreneurialism and self-employment amongst long-standing immigrant groups in the UK has been intensively researched (Werbner 1984; Ram *et al.* 2002; Bagwell 2008; Gomez and Cheung 2009), but thus far, this kind of activity amongst A8

migrants, including Poles, has remained under-researched, perhaps in part because of the initial impression generated by the UK press in the early years of EU Accession, when the popular discourse was that Poles were 'taking our jobs' rather than making their *own* jobs, and creating others, through entrepreneurial activity. Arrivals from the NMS, and particularly those from Poland have often been presumed to be 'job takers' working in low-paid industries (see Portes and French 2005; McDowell *et al*. 2007; Meardi 2007) rather than job makers. Consequently, accession entrepreneurs have been largely absent from academic and media debates. This omission is surprising as Polish entrepreneurship has become a very visible presence in Britain's urban areas (Figures 2 and 3). Polish retail businesses can be found in many cities and towns and are easily identified by their shops fronts and signs. Polish migrants have established businesses in many sectors including Polish restaurants, delicatessens, supermarkets, night clubs, hairdressers, employment agencies, plumbers, builders, painters and decorators and cheque cashing agencies.

FIGURE 2 HERE

FIGURE 3 HERE

Accession migrants settle in different places for different reasons; cheap housing, low living costs, an abundance of work, availability of good schooling for foreign national children, the prior establishment of a supportive community of co-ethnics, and so on (see Ross 2006) may all act to encourage immigration and settlement. We argue here, based on the indication drawn from the comparison between the WRS and NINo datasets that self-employment may be a significant economic activity for Poles, that the local environment for business start-up should also be considered a

migrant magnet. By extension, we would also argue that future research into the labour market experiences of Polish and other NMS migrants should not be restricted to the analysis of NMS migrants as employees, but also to the analysis of NMS migrants as entrepreneurs and job creators. The intra-urban geography of NMS entrepreneurship requires further research as it would appear to have an interesting geography related to peripheral locations adjacent to central shopping districts. In the UK Polish entrepreneurs appear to be playing an important role in transforming vacant, peripheral and relatively low cost retail space into niche retail spaces that are contributing to urban revitalisation.

In response, we are conducting intensive research into Polish Entrepreneurship in the West Midlands to explore the form that this takes in relation to accession. We have identified 48 Polish firms operating in the West Midlands that are associated with accession. The 48 firms do not represent the complete population of such firms. Thirty-six of these firms were established prior to accession between December 2002 and 30th April 2004 whilst 12 were established after accession between 1st May 2004 and June 2009. The firms established prior to EU enlargement stressed the importance of migrating before May 2004 so that their businesses would be able to capitalise immediately on accession migration flows. This raises a series of questions regarding migration that is linked to major geopolitical transformations, such as accession. The driver behind the migration of Polish entrepreneurs was, unlike many other migrations, not a push related to war, but an alteration in the structure of relationships between countries driven by negotiations over a treaty. This means

that for many of these migrants their migration was carefully planned around the geopolitics of accession.

Conclusion

The accession of ten new member states to the European Union is associated with new migration flows that have led to much media discussion and political comment. The analysis of NMS migration to the UK is difficult as there are problems with available national datasets; migration is always a difficult process to track effectively.

The paper makes two significant contributions to existing research into labour migration from the NMS to the UK, and in particular that from Poland. First, it explores the differences between the widely used Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) dataset and the more recently recognised National Insurance Number allocation (NINo). On the basis of this analysis, the article calls into question the conclusions drawn about the location of NMS migrants in the UK that are based on the analysis of the WRS dataset. Existing studies have identified a rural or peripheral bias in the intra-geography of Polish migration to the UK. Our analysis suggests that NMS migration has focussed on both urban and rural locations.

Second, the discrepancies observed between the WRS and NINo datasets potentially reveal a geography of self-employment and entrepreneurial activity amongst Polish and potentially other NMS migrants. Entrepreneurial activity amongst NMS migrants is under-researched and merits further investigation. The drivers behind this process of new firm formation must be explored. Our preliminary research into this activity

suggests that two waves of Polish entrepreneurs responded to the business opportunities associated with EU enlargement – pre-accession migrants who established businesses in anticipation of EU enlargement and post-accession migrants. It is this issue that is the current focus of our research into the geography of accession migrants to the UK.

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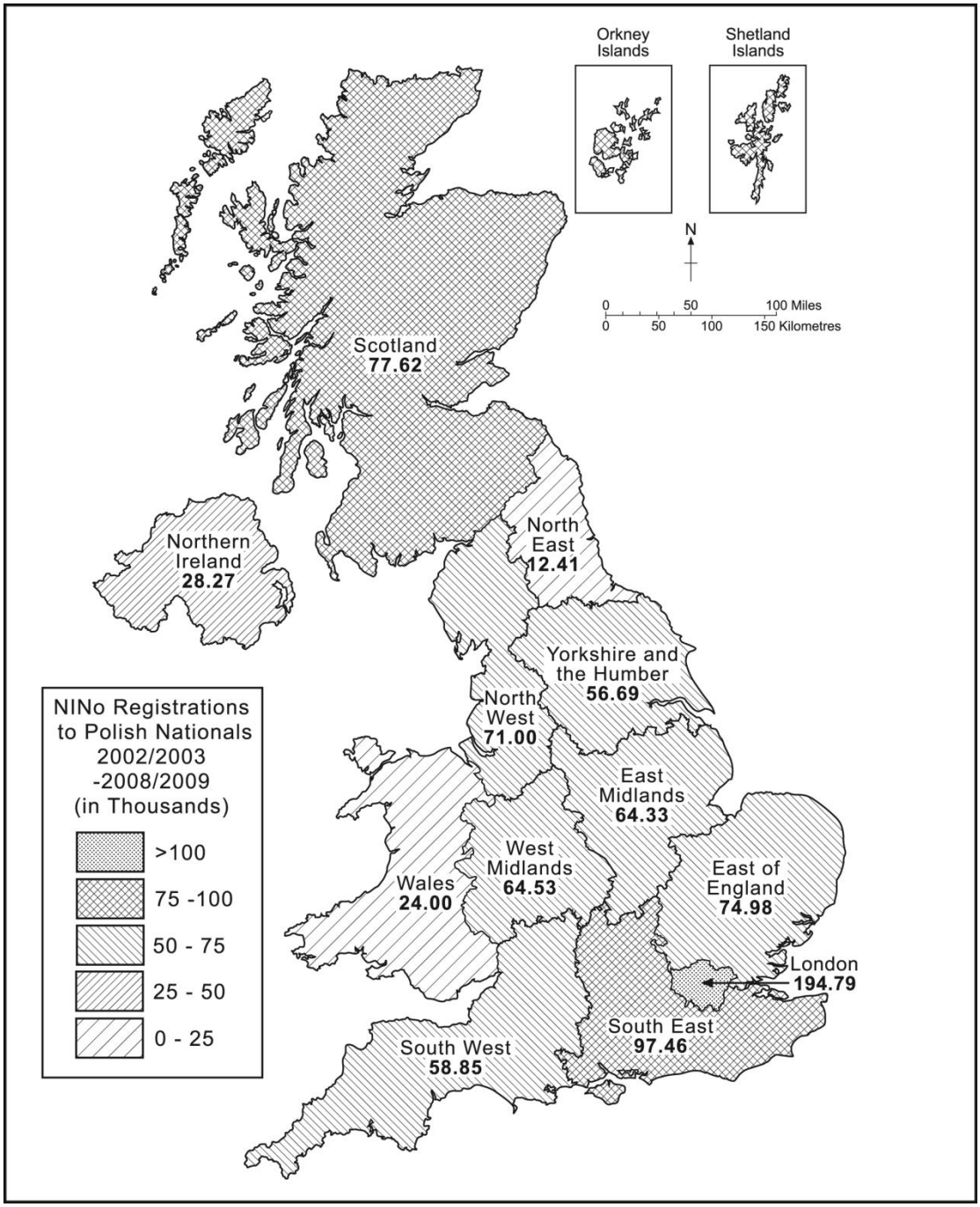
Graphics

Figure 1: NINo registrations to Polish nationals 2002/2003- 2008/2009 for the Government Office Regions of the UK



Source: Author's own calculations from NINo dataset 2002/2003- 2008/2009.

Figure 2. Polish Delicatessen in Bournemouth.

Source: Author's own photograph

Figure 3. Eastern European Supermarket in King's Lynn.

Source: Author's own photograph